

Summer, 2006

Introduction:

In Cambodia, approximately 20,000 burn injuries occur each year with about 2,000 resulting in death. Two thirds of burns occur to children under the age of ten and two thirds of those occur to toddlers (aged 5-15 months). In the summer of 2005, a survey was conducted with Grade 5 students in the Cambodian province of Kampot. The survey gathered information on the children's knowledge of burn prevention and treatment and resulted in the production of five Public Service Announcements (PSAs), which were aired on Khmer television beginning in October of 2005.

The purpose of this study was to conduct a similar survey with children in the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh and to compare the results from the city to those in the province. In addition, we wished to determine the most efficient means of imparting burn prevention and first aid information to the students. As such, a pilot study was designed to assess whether the children got more from reading the information in the form of a picture book or by watching the five short Public Service Announcements that were broadcast on television.

Methods:

Burn Prevention Survey

In the summers of 2005 and 2006, a 34-question survey was administered to 420 and 349 elementary school children respectively. The survey was written in English and translated to Khmer and then back-translated to English to ensure there were no mistakes in translation. Questions were posed in both multiple choice and open-ended format and covered demographic background, television watching habits and burn prevention and treatment knowledge. 60 surveys from 2006 were only partially imputed into the database, and as such the analyses for this year were conducted only on those children who had answered the question. Descriptive analyses were used and the results between years were compared. Television watching habits in 2006 were compared to the times the PSAs were broadcast to determine if the children were likely to have seen them.

Pilot Study

Two International schools where the classes were taught in English were used to conduct the pilot study. Every student completed the burn prevention survey. The class was then split into two equal groups where one read the story and the other watched the five Public Service Announcements. The information presented by each medium was the same. Four days later a follow-up survey was administered, which consisted of six open-ended questions. The purpose of the second survey was to determine what had been retained by the each group of students.

Results:

A) Burn Prevention Survey Comparison between years

- 349 children were surveyed in 2006 and 420 children were surveyed in 2005
- 7 schools were visited in 2006 and 8 schools were visited in 2005

- 92% of children in Phnom Penh have a TV in their home whereas only 52% of children in Kampot had a TV
- 85% of children in Phnom Penh watch TV on weekends and 69% prefer to watch in the afternoon
- only 36% of PSAs were broadcast during this time window
- significantly more children from the city have had a burn than from the province, but in both cases the vast majority of injuries occurred in the home

B) Pilot Study

- 4 of the 6 questions were answered correctly more frequently by those children who had read the story book
- 1 question was answered better by those children who had seen the PSAs
- 1 question was answered equally well by both groups

C) Burn Prevention Survey 2006

- the average number of people in a household was seven
- 71% of children cared for at least one other child
- 70% of children stated they had had a burn injury in the last two years

Conclusions:

Burn Prevention Survey

Though in some cases the children in the capital seemed to be more aware of burn prevention strategies than those in the province, there is still an obvious need for intervention and education to reduce burn injuries to Khmer children. Urban children are living in crowded households and are routinely caring for many children at a time, which helps to demonstrate the importance of educating this particular group of individuals. The PSAs, though likely useful, were not being broadcast at a time when most urban children were watching TV and thus may not have had the desired impact.

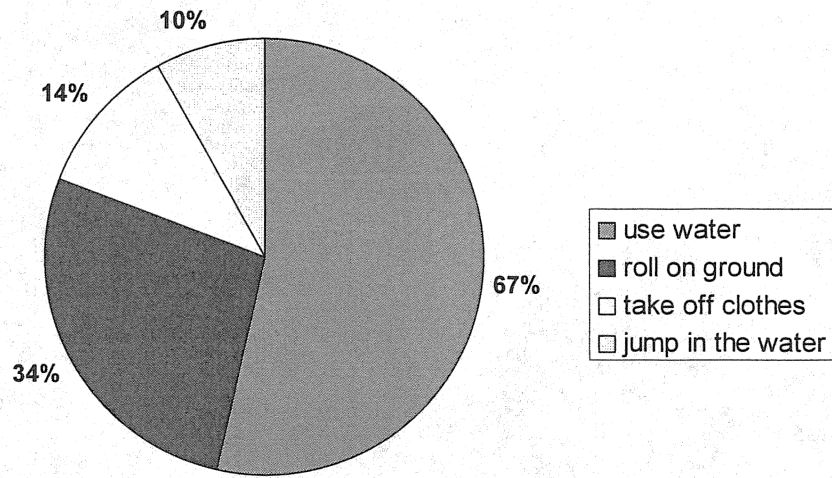
Pilot Study

The results only very narrowly demonstrated that the books allow the information imparted to be better retained by the children. Before concluding which means is more efficient, it would be useful to increase the number of children surveyed and broaden the analysis to include Khmer-speaking schools. This would require the more active involvement of teachers and the translation of the follow-up survey into Khmer.

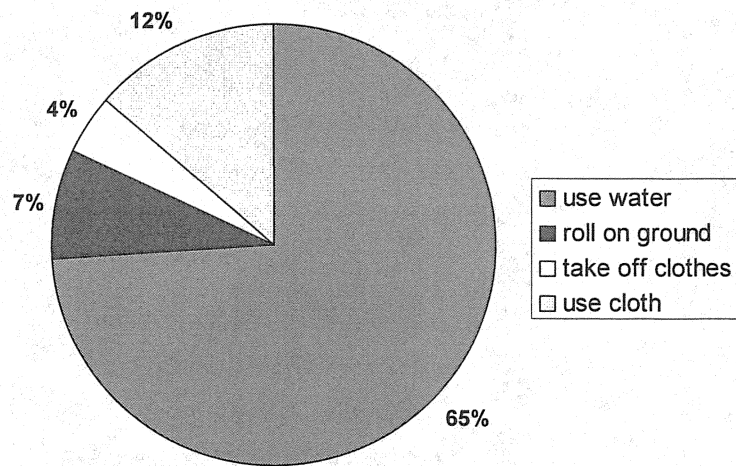
Acknowledgements:

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Figure 1: How Khmer Children Would Extinguish Their Clothes on Fire



2006



2005

Figure 2: How Khmer Children Would Extinguish a Pot of Oil on Fire

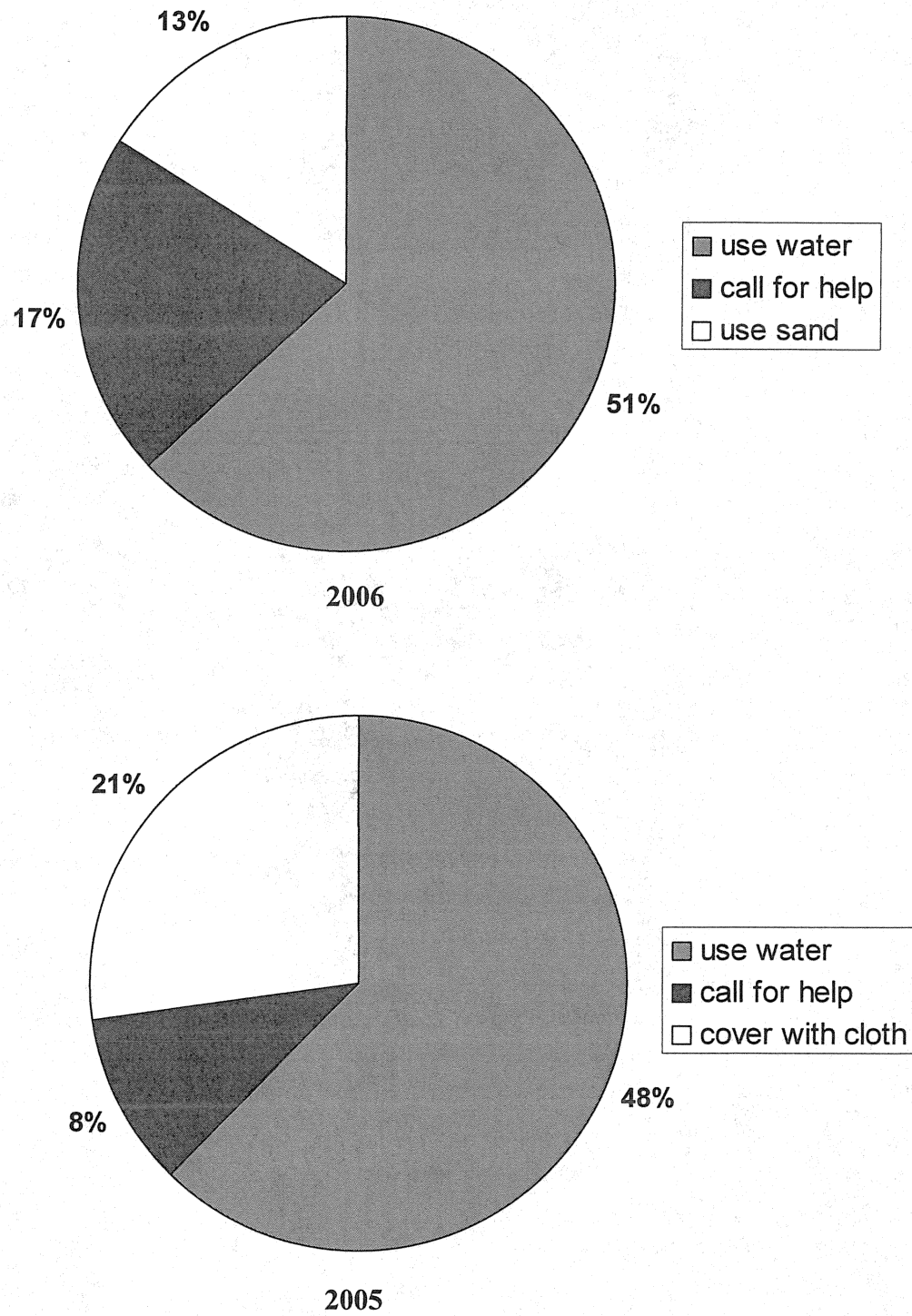


Figure 2: Burn Injuries to Khmer Children in 2006

